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SPECIAL ELICITATION

YOUR INPUT REGARDING THE NEXT EPSQ

The Defense Security Service has compiled a set of initial ideas regarding a future version of EPSQ (beyond version 2.2). We are looking for feedback from EPSQ users.

Following receipt of your feedback, DSS will pursue in-depth conversations and small group discussions with a number of our customers.

It is important that we hear the voices of a wide range of EPSQ users, representing organizations large and small. We are pleased to send this to over 5600 EPSQ Enews subscribers around the world.

Our customers deserve a better, more reliable, vehicle for sending requests for Personnel Security Investigations, and DISCO 562s, to the Defense Security Service.

THE NEXT EPSQ

Our vision is that DSS should aim to produce a product:

- * Which will allow users to complete the same suite of forms that the present software produces - the SF86; DD1879; DISCO 562; SF85P; SF85P-S, NAC Security Information sheet, Spouse SAC shell, SII shell. In addition, our goal is to allow users to request Added Coverages, Upgrades, and send corrective/additional information.

- * Which will provide DSS with (essentially) the same data as present.

- * Which will have validation rules quite similar to the current EPSQ.

- * Which will be fully Web based for the Security Officer. The Security Officer will complete their portion on-line hit SUBMIT and the data will be submitted to DSS. The Security Officer may also have access to other system information that will help them to avoid unnecessary or incorrect requests.

- * Which will be platform independent.

- * Which should be backward compatible that is, it will accept and use data regarding a Subject that comes from EPSQ 2x.

- * Which will protect the sensitive data provided by Subject and Security Officer utilizing enhanced encryption and security.

- * Which will allow only known parties to submit requests and DISCO 562s through the use of electronic encryption and identification. Note that this may increase a users Access administration responsibilities.

- * Which should, as much as possible, meet the needs of agencies other than DSS who use the same forms.

The new EPSQ will also be an inherently more user-friendly product considering the limitations of the forms themselves. For example:

- * Users will be prompted automatically that (for example) Middle Names are required, or that EPSQ is looking for dates in a specific format.

- * Users will be able to access a more robust set of Help features.

- * Users will be able to view on-screen a list of the employments, residences, and relatives listed as they go along entering data

- * Users will be able to print an entire form, or any section of a form, as they wish. The printout should look exactly like the actual official forms or, users should at least have the option of printing their forms in this format.

A MAJOR QUESTION

A critical decision point regarding the next iteration of EPSQ is How should Subjects access the forms? Should the next EPSQ be purely Web-based for our Subjects, or would DSS be better served creating software that can be easily accessed and installed by a Subject, filled with data, and then submitted to their Security Officer. There are advantages to each method.

Pure-Web: Pro:

- *Total platform independence

- *Many users are (or will be) familiar with working on the Web and completing forms on the Web.

- *DSS would be better able to change instructions, guidance, or even forms themselves in real time

Pure-Web: Con:

*Typical Subject may spend as much as 1 to 4 hours dialed up, completing an SF86 on-line

*If a Subjects on-line session were interrupted, would data be lost?

*Data may not be saved while it is being created. User will have to hit a Submit button each time a data set is to be saved.

Downloadable by the Subject: Pro:

*Subject could enter data off-line, at his/her own speed

*Software can be loaded to older machines or those without a Web connection

Downloadable by the Subject: Con:

*Numerous problems occur due to difficulty downloading and installing

*May lose platform independence

If a Pure-Web product were created, the Subject would go to the DSS Website, and would fill out, validate, and print their form on-line and press Submit. The Security Officer would access the Subjects form, and provide their accompanying information on-line. They would transmit to DSS by pressing Submit at the end of the process.

If a hybrid product were created, Subject would access and install their EPSQ software. They would complete, validate, and print their form independent from the Internet, and eventually upload their form to a DSS Website or provide it directly to their Security Officer. Security Officer would access the Subjects form, and provide their accompanying information on-line. They would transmit to DSS by pressing Submit at the end of the process.

With either scenario, the Facility Security Officer would complete the DISCO 562 fully on-line.

YOUR THOUGHTS AND IDEAS

After reading this synopsis, please give a moment of thought to a short set of questions. You can access these questions at http://www.dss.mil/epsq/next_epsq.htm . Note that the final question can be answered in as much, or as little, detail as you wish. Please reply by JUNE 1, 2001.

Thank you in advance for sharing your thoughts. You are a stakeholder in this new product. Your input is valuable and will be well considered.

DSS EPSQ Project Office
